Claim 1 (currently amended) A process for producing aliphatic alcohols of 3 to 10 carbon atoms from high boilers, comprising adjusting the high boilers to a neutralization number of ~~up to~~ not below 2 mg of KOH/g by addition of an alkali metal compound and treating the resulting mixture at a temperature of 165 to 185°C and a pressure of 80 to 150 hPa in a distillation column and ~~the~~ overhead product taken off is subsequently hydrogenated.

Claim 2 (previously presented) The process of claim 1, wherein the neutralization number is brought to a value in the range from 2 to 5 mg of KOH/g by addition of an alkali metal compound.

Claim 3 (previously presented) The process of claim 1 wherein the temperature is 170 to 180°C.

Claim 4 (previously presented) The process of claim 1 wherein an aqueous solution of the alkali metal compound is used.

Claim 5 (previously presented) The process of claim 1 wherein the alkali metal compound is an alkali metal hydroxide.

Claim 6 (previously presented) The process of claim 5, wherein the alkali metal hydroxide is sodium hydroxide or potassium hydroxide.

Claim 7 (previously presented) The process of claim 1 wherein the aliphatic alcohol is 2-ethylhexanol.

Claim 8 (previously presented) The process of claim 1 wherein the alkali metal compound is added to the feed to the distillation column.